

## **Lisburn Sea Cadets UMT Report 2024**

The Lisburn UMT remains dedicated to providing support to our CO and his team whilst making sure that we comply with our legal obligations as Trustees.

This past year was marked by the very sad and unexpected death shortly after Christmas 2023 of one of our most dependable adult volunteers; Carolyn Elwood, Her dedication to the children, the Lisburn Sea Cadet Unit and the MSSC in general were clearly evident in all she did, and as such she is very sorely missed.

Initially 2024 presented a continuation of the financial challenges reported last year, however, innovative fund raising ideas, hard work and a great deal of effort in identifying sympathetic funders produced a significant cash uplift easing the considerable pressure on the UMT. The continued provision of a minibus for Unit and District use, however, remains a somewhat contentious issue, as the newly introduced periodic vehicle safety checks add to the financial burden of running what is an important unit asset. Retention of the vehicle will be continuously under review to ensure affordability. Notwithstanding this, as stated in the last report, the Lisburn UMT are keen to continue their support of District events with the use of the Lisburn facilities and our equipment.

SLt John McCullagh, our CO, has once again proved his worth and value in taking charge of the Unit during the year. PO Carolyn Elwood's untimely death presented very real challenges in maintaining a large enough adult volunteer group to run the Unit. John has met this through sheer hard work and by successfully bringing senior Cadets who had aged out, back into the Unit as adult instructors. His training programme and engagement activities have kept him, his staff and the Cadets very busy and productive throughout the year. John and the team (including several of the UMT) have also been heavily involved in the fund-raising efforts of 2024.

Continued fund raising will remain top of the agenda in 2025, as will adding to the number of UMT members, Cadets and adult volunteer staff. Also on our agenda for next year is a change in Commanding Officer, as in December 2025 John McCullagh will have served for 5 very busy and demanding years. A replacement is available and other wider-reaching roles within the Northern Ireland District Sea Cadet organisation await John once he hands over responsibility.

As ever, this past year provided challenges and difficulties for the CO and UMT, particularly in the loss of a dedicated member of the team. Despite this, the efforts of all concerned have borne fruit and on reflection 2024 can be regarded as a sad, but nevertheless successful one for Lisburn Sea Cadets.